

Washington, D.C. - With overwhelming bipartisan support, late last night the House agreed to an amendment to H.R. 5576, *The Transportation, Treasury, HUD and DC Appropriations Act* offered by Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-08), that would increase funding for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of Fuel Economy from \$1.3 million to \$8 million. The amendment passed 234 to 190, with 39 Republicans voting in favor of it.

In recent weeks Congress has considered several proposals to improve fuel supply. By supporting this amendment, Congress addresses the demand side of the energy equation by encouraging increased corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) through incentives.

Bean has long advocated public-private partnerships that would encourage the auto industry to improve the fuel economy of their vehicles. Bean's amendment would stimulate the development of strategies like retooling credits that help automakers modify their manufacturing processes toward production of more fuel efficient passenger cars and light trucks.

"Exploring the best ways to incentivize fuel efficiency is a realistic, commonsense approach to reducing our dependence on foreign oil," Bean said. "At a time when we are paying more at the pump than ever before, Americans are looking for a viable strategy to tackle rising gas prices. For too long Congressional stalemate has impeded real innovation in fuel efficiency. By agreeing to my amendment, Congress has supported striking a balance between ensuring the competitiveness of auto manufacturers and providing needed relief for American drivers."

The cost of the amendment is offset by cutting \$6.7 million in bureaucratic and administrative funding for the Transportation Department.

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